

What's New in the MPDC

OCTOBER 21, 2002

MPDC STEPS UP EFFORTS TO KEEP DC SAFE, AS INVESTIGATION INTO AREA SHOOTINGS CONTINUES

The MPDC is continuing its stepped-up efforts to help keep DC neighborhoods safe, while assisting in the investigation of the metropolitan area sniper shootings. Last week, Chief Ramsey declared an emergency, thus allowing the Department to change members' schedules to enhance patrols in DC neighborhoods, especially around schools. For example, officers assigned to the midnight and day shifts are being held over to assist with morning and afternoon patrols around DC schools. The MPDC's Emergency Response Team also remains on alert. In addition, MPDC detectives continue to serve on the multi-agency task force, based in Montgomery County, that is investigating the sniper shootings, and Chief Ramsey is regularly meeting with other area chiefs to coordinate investigative and response plans. The Department's Joint Operations Command Center, including its Closed Circuit TV system, remains activated to help coordinate information and the MPDC response. For the latest lookouts and other information related to the sniper shootings, visit the MPDC website at:

mpdc.dc.gov/main.shtm

RESIDENTS ENCOURAGED TO REMAIN VIGILANT, BUT RESERVE 9-1-1 FOR EMERGENCIES

The MPDC continues to encourage DC residents to remain vigilant in the hunt for the metropolitan-area sniper and to keep providing police with tips and clues related to the case. Residents are encouraged to keep abreast of the lookouts and other news involving the case, and to contact police if they have any information that may be helpful to investigators. However, the MPDC reminds residents to reserve 9-1-1 for emergency, in-progress situations. Over the last two weeks, DC's Public Safety Communications Center has experienced an increase in call volume, primarily related to the sniper case. While some of these calls are appropriate for 9-1-1 or 3-1-1 (for example, highly suspicious vehicles matching the lookouts provided), many other tips and clues should instead be directed to the multi-agency task force for investigation. Task force officials have set up three ways for citizens to provide information related to the case: a toll-free telephone number, (888) 324-9800; an e-mail address, taskforce@co.mo.md.us; and a mailing address, PO Box 7875, Gaithersburg, MD, 20898-7875.

NEWS & NOTES

- DC has been recognized for its spirited celebration of National Night Out 2002 on August 6. Among cities with 300,000 or more residents, DC placed 11th among 21 award winners and dozens of other participating cities. Thanks and congratulations to all residents, police officers and others who made this year's NNO celebration a success!
- The DC Council's Judiciary Committee will hold a public hearing on the "Omnibus Public Safety Agency Reform Amendment Act of 2002" on Thursday, October 24, 2002, at 10 am in the Wilson Building. Chief Ramsey is scheduled to testify concerning the proposed act's impact on MPDC personnel policies and operations.

CRIME IN DC DOWN SHARPLY IN SEPTEMBER, YEAR-TO-DATE REDUCTION IS 3.5 PERCENT

The number of serious crimes reported in DC declined nearly 17 percent in September, when compared with September 2001, according to preliminary statistics compiled by the MPDC. Except for arson offenses (which rose from 4 to 5), all other crime categories were lower this September than in September 2001. Preliminary citywide statistics show that homicides decreased nearly 41 percent (from 27 to 16), sexual assaults declined 26 percent, and robberies fell almost 11 percent. Among property crimes, there were significant decreases in thefts from auto (-27.1%) and burglaries (-24.5%). Through the first nine months of 2002, serious crime in DC was down 3.5 percent when compared with the same period of 2001. Five of the seven police districts recorded decreases in crime in September and four districts have seen crime drop through the first nine months of the year, according to the preliminary numbers. For detailed crime statistics, organized by police district and the District as a whole, click on:

mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/crstats.shtm

CALL-ANSWER TIMES FOR 9-1-1 AND 3-1-1 IMPROVE

The latest data from DC's Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) show that the times needed to answer both the 9-1-1 emergency and 3-1-1 non-emergency calls have improved in recent months, reaching their lowest levels since the PSCC opened in June 2001. In August 2002, the average wait time for 9-1-1 calls was 8 seconds. That compares with 11 seconds in July 2002 and 16 seconds for the year-long period from July 2001 to June 2002. For 3-1-1, average wait times have declined from 85 seconds in the July 2001-June 2002 time period, to 52 seconds in July 2002 and 35 seconds in August 2002. The improvements in call-answer times have followed increased staffing at the PSCC and more efficient scheduling that is better matching personnel with peak call-times. Even with the improvements, the call-answer times are still higher than the MPDC's goals, and business process improvements and close monitoring of data will continue. For more information about 9-1-1, 3-1-1, and when to use these and other police hotlines, click on:

mpdc.dc.gov/info/phone/phone.shtm

NEWS & NOTES

- Mark your calendars. The MPDC's third annual Awards Ceremony will be held on Thursday, November 14, 2002, at 7 pm, in DAR Constitution Hall. This free event honors police officers, civilian employees and community members who have made a difference in fighting crime and building safer neighborhoods. For more information, contact Michael D. Scott in the MPDC at (202) 727-4771.

Information, ideas or comments about this service?

E-mail Kevin Morison, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov.

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